



Office of Congressman Barney Frank

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Frank Responds Sharply to Fabricated Stories Claiming He Plans to Introduce Bill on "Universal Voter Registration"

WASHINGTON – Congressman Barney Frank today responded sharply to fabricated right-wing media accounts of his supposed plans to introduce a bill on "universal voter registration."

The stories falsely claim that Congressman Frank plans to introduce legislation that would require the government to register anyone to vote whose name appears in a government database, including illegal aliens and felons. Frank has absolutely no plans to introduce a bill, has not worked on such a bill, has not discussed such a bill with other members, and does not even know of the existence of such a bill.

This fallacious story originated with John Fund, columnist and editorial board member of the Wall Street Journal. (A segment from Fund's speech appears below.) It was propagated by Rush Limbaugh on his syndicated radio program, by Glenn Beck on the Fox News Channel, by the Washington Times, and by many conservative blogs. None of the media outlets contacted Congressman Frank's office to find out if the story is true.

"This is how the right-wing echo chamber works," said Congressman Frank. "They begin with an absolute falsehood – John Fund's claim that I plan to introduce universal voter legislation, a claim for which there is no basis whatsoever. It is not a misinterpretation, it is not a quote out of context, it is not a misunderstanding – it is a lie. Period."

"Right-wing television reports it. Right-wing talk radio repeats it. The Washington Times writes about it. They say it so often and with such certainty that people begin to believe it even when it is a complete lie. These are their tactics."

In his speech at the conservative Restoration Weekend conference in November, Wall Street Journal columnist John Fund claimed Congressman Frank and Senator Chuck Schumer had concocted a plan to steal elections. The following is a transcript of Fund's comments:

Democrats were very rattled by the November 3rd election results. What do liberals do when they lose elections? They change the rules. In January, Chuck Schumer and Barney Frank will propose universal voter registration.

What is universal voter registration? It means all of the state laws on elections will be overridden by a federal mandate. The feds will tell the states, "Take everyone on every list of welfare recipients you have, take everyone on every list of unemployed you have, take everyone on every list of property owners, take everyone on every list of driver's license holders, and register them to vote regardless of whether they want to be."

By the way, there'll be felon re-enfranchisement too. At that point, you have destroyed the integrity of the registration process.

Now they will sell this very cleverly. They will say, "Well, OK, ACORN did have some problems with voter registration. We shouldn't have these third party rogue groups out there. So let's put ACORN out of business. Let's register everybody."

Now the problem, of course, is there are a lot of duplicates. And there are a lot of people on those rolls who are illegal aliens. It's not a clean list. They don't care. So, this is the issue you haven't heard about. There's a reason you haven't heard about it. They don't want you to hear about it.

The path between the day this bill is introduced and the day it hits the House floor will probably be less than two weeks. Get ready for it. You can stop it. Don't get me wrong. But this is their stealth bill that is even more sneaky than the health care bill.

RESOURCES

Video of Mr. Fund's speech [can be found at this link](#)

Congressman Frank's [letter to Mr. Fund](#), requesting that he formally correct his fallacious claim, can be found here.

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC

January 13, 2010

Mr. John Fund
The Wall Street Journal
1211 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10036

Dear Mr. Fund,

I was puzzled during the last couple of weeks to be asked why I was supporting something called "universal voter registration," which supposedly would allow all sorts of undesirable people to register to vote. I was puzzled because I have had absolutely no involvement in such a proposal.

I asked my staff to check the source of the rumor, and we discovered that it is you. Apparently last fall, you invented a story that Senator Schumer and I planned to introduce such legislation. I've since learned that Senator Schumer is working on legislation regarding voting, but I am told that it does not remotely resemble your version of it. But more importantly to me is that I have had no involvement with this whatsoever, with Senator Schumer or anybody else.

You simply made this up with regard to me. I must tell you that I was not surprised, because this sort of fictionalized attack on political opponents has sadly become characteristic of many on the right. And once you lied about me in this regard, several of your right-wing colleagues in the media, including Rush Limbaugh, Glenn Beck and the Washington Times, repeated it.

I should note that, again not surprisingly, you made no effort to check with me or anybody who works with me to find out if what you said was true. You made your assertion with no factual basis and without any effort to verify it. To me, that qualifies as a lie.

So I now write not simply to tell you that you are entirely wrong in your assertion about me but, in the absence of your being able to show any basis on which you made such a statement, to ask that you acknowledge that fact.



BARNEY FRANK